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ABSTRACT

Community organizing can encompass coalition building or community development, each of which represents steps in getting something done in a community. Before undertaking a project, it is important to figure out the exact problem the community is trying to address. From there, it can be determined how to address it, who else will be involved, and how the steps to success will be measured. This packet provides tools, tips, and resources that will help communities undertake needed measures to reduce substance abuse and gun violence. It includes national organizations, publications, and community leaders who have expertise in community organizing. (Contains 13 resources.) (JDM)

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COMMUNITY ORGANIZING

Technical Assistance Packet

Join Together:
A National Resource for Communities Fighting Substance Abuse and Gun Violence

www.jointogether.org

April 2000

ED 456 350

Description of the Issue

Community organizing can be known as coalition building or community development. This will mean different things to different communities, however, each can be seen as a way to create helping systems in communities, (AHEC/Community Partners). Regardless of the phrasing, each is but one step in a process of getting something done in your community. It is important to understand which problem your community is trying to address, how you are going to address it, who else you are going to work with and how successful you will be while you are community organizing. To begin to get information, check the "Resources", "Get Help" and "Take Action" sections on Join Together Online at www.jointogether.org/. These areas have frequently updated resource and contact information as well as online versions of our Monthly Action Kits. These kits offer tools, tips and resources that will help communities take action to reduce substance abuse and gun violence.

What follows is a list of national organizations, publications, community leaders with an expertise in community organizing, and community stories.

National Organizations

Building Healthy Communities - AHEC Community Partners
AHEC/Community Partners program has been developing, promoting, and sustaining community coalitions across the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Publications about community-building are available online and by calling AHEC.
AHEC/Community Partners, 24 South Prospect Street, Amherst, MA 01002; Tel: 413-253-4283; Fax: 413-253-7131; www.ahecpartners.org/

Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP)
CSAP is the federal organization designed to encourage creative and effective efforts aimed at reducing and eliminating alcohol, tobacco, and other drug (ATOD) problems in our society. CSAP has many publications about prevention and community organizing which are available through the National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information (NCADI), www.health.org or 800-729-6686.
CSAP, 5600 Fishers Lane, Rockwall II Bldg., Room 9D16, Rockville, MD 20857; Tel: 800-729-6686; www.samhsa.gov/csap/index.html

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Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA)
The mission of CADCA is to build and strengthen the capacity of coalitions to prevent and reduce substance abuse and violence in communities across America. CADCA is a membership organization that provides technical assistance and distributes publications such as its newsletter.
901 N. Pitt Street, Suite 300, Alexandria VA, 22201; Tel: 703-706-0560; Fax: 703-706-0565; www.cadca.org

The National Civic League
The National Civic League works directly with communities to foster cross-sector collaboration and grass roots problem solving. NCL provides technical assistance, training, and publications.
1445 Market Street, Suite 300, Denver, CO 80202; Tel: 303-571-4343; Fax: 303-571-4404; www.ncl.org/ncl

Co/Motion – Alliance for Justice
Co/Motion offers training and assistance that provides young people 15 to 25 years old with a framework for developing their own models of youth-led social change. Co/Motion challenges young people to think critically about social change, analyze the root causes of problems, learn the skills and tools of advocacy and organizing, put these skills to work through real action campaigns, and gain confidence in their ability to be agents of change in their communities.
2000 P Street, NW, Suite 712, Washington, DC 20036; Tel: 202-822-6070; Fax: 202-822-6078; www.afj.org/crtp/whatscom.html

Publications and How to Order Them

The publications listed here are both free and of modest cost.

- *The following Join Together publications are available online at www.jointogether.org/publications or by calling Join Together at 617-437-1500:*
  - Working the Web Monthly Action Kit
  - Lessons Learned -- Civic Problem-Solving and Substance Abuse
  - Lessons Learned -- Race Relations and Substance Abuse
  - Lessons Learned -- Health Care and Substance Abuse
  - Gun Violence Prevention Action Kit -- What Communities Can Do to Reduce Violence in Schools
  - Gun Violence Prevention Action Kit -- How Communities Can Take Action to Prevent Gun Violence
  - Gun Violence Prevention Action Kit -- What You Can Do To Change Gun Policies
- The *Take Action* section of the Join Together website on Gun Violence Prevention gives you step-by step instructions and ideas about community organizing. For more information, go to www.jointogether.org/gv.

- *Effective Community Mobilization: Lessons From Experience: A CSAP Implementation Guide*
  Available from the National Clearinghouse on Alcohol and Drug Information at www.health.org/pubs/ or 800-729-6686. This publication presents previous work and field research on community mobilization.

- *Preventing Alcohol and Other Drug Problems in Our Communities: Case Studies and Resources*
  This 90-page booklet offers case studies about community organizations, funding opportunities, technical assistance providers and publications/resources.
  Copies are available for $15 (prepaid) from: Community Information Exchange, 1029 Vermont Avenue, NW, Suite 710, Washington, DC 20005; Tel: 202-628-2981; www.comminfoexch.org/

- *Helping Communities Mobilize Against Crime, Drugs, and Other Problems*
  Twenty-one lessons drawn from the experiences of dozens of communities which suggest strategies for success, identify vital elements for starting and maintaining community mobilization efforts, and looks at surmounting common obstacles.
  Available from: National Crime Prevention Council, 1700 K Street, NW, Second Floor, Washington, DC 20006-3817; Tel: 800-627-2911; www.ncpc.org/

- *Building Communities From the Inside Out: A Path Toward Finding and Mobilizing a Community's Assets*
  This publication is a very comprehensive guide for assessing a community's problems, deciding on a plan of action, capturing local institutions for community building, rebuilding the community economy, and maintaining community mobilization.
  Available from: ACTA Publications, 4848 North Clark Street, Chicago, IL 60640; Tel: 800-397-2282 or 773-271-1030; www.nwu.edu/IPR/publications/

- *Collaborating to Improve Community Health – Workbook and Guide to Best Practices in Creating Healthier Communities and Populations*
  This workbook is the first resource that shows how key players from local governments, businesses, health care organizations, school boards, churches and police departments can be turned into a team, working together to make their communities better places to live, work, raise families and grow old. It contains a wealth of resources including worksheets, guidelines, overhead slides and case studies, all designed to help communities implement a workable plan of action. For more information, contact Jossey-Bass Publishers, 350 Sansome St., San Francisco, CA 94104, Tel: 800-956-7739, Fax: 800-605-2665; www.josseybass.com.

- *Organizing for Social Change: A Manual for Activists in the 1990s*
  A handbook on the fundamentals of direct action organizing. This manual covers the techniques of organizing, building and using power, and creating pathways for citizen participation. For more information, contact Seven Locks Press, P.O. Box 68, Arlington, VA 22210; Tel: 800-354-5348.

Community Leaders

Mary Ann Andrews
Drug Free Communities
202 13th Avenue East
Sarasota, FL 34208
Tel: 941-708-9300
Fax: 941-748-2553

Judy Cushing
The Oregon Partnership
9220 SW Barbur Boulevard
#119-284
Portland, OR 97219
Tel: 503-768-9659
Fax: 503-244-5506

Richard McCain
Substance Abuse Initiative of
Greater Cleveland
614 W. Superior Avenue
Suite 300
Tel: 216-771-8281
Fax: 216-771-8285

Calvin Allen
Springfield Community Center
618 N. Benton
Springfield, MO 65806
Tel: 417-866-4359
Fax: 417-866-8332

Community Stories

Stories listed below are reprinted from Join Together Online. Similar stories can be found at www.jointogether.org.

St. Joseph County Coalition Against Drugs, South Bend, Indiana has been successful in building a coalition, helping youth-serving agencies to collaborate, developing a public awareness campaign and getting young people more involved. As the result of technical assistance and asking the right questions, the coalition formed some critical alliances. The Local Coordinating Council formed an alliance with Healthy Communities Partnership and United Communities which began exploring the possibility of a merger and positioned them to pursue a Center for Substance Abuse Prevention Grant. Contact Gail Ryniak at 219-234-0051 ext. 323.

The **Community Prevention Network of Western New York,** Amherst, New York has been successful in building a coalition as well as getting businesses and clergy involved. With some technical assistance and coalition building efforts, they were able to triple the membership of faith community, the business community and the criminal justice community. They launched a local policy panel with a particular focus on fake identifications and under 21 alcohol-serving vendors. Contact Janet Duffy at 716-831-2298.